



ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE HERALD

Volume 121, Issue 1

Welcomed in Christ. Called to community. Sent to serve.

January 2021

A Note from the Pastor...

I am excited to announce that St. John Lutheran Church is embarking on a year of learning around the topics of social inequality and racial injustice. At its December meeting, St. John's Church Council passed a resolution dedicating 2021 as a year of education and self-discovery around how our society is structured unfairly so that we might better live out our mission statement: *Welcomed in Christ. Called to community. Sent to serve.*

The church council and I believe strongly that one of the central activities of the church is welcoming others, and our mission statement begins intentionally with the word welcomed. So, just as Christ has welcomed us, we are called to welcome others, regardless of how different they might be from us (Romans 15:7). It is these differences that we will be studying. How can we welcome others unless we have a better understanding of their lives and their history? In addition, we must learn more about our own history in relation to our neighbors.

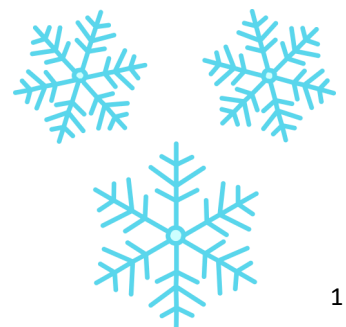
As Christians, we are called to be leaders in showing love to our neighbor. The first step we should take is to seek understanding. If we are to truly welcome the neighbor, we must be willing to acknowledge that we do not understand everything that our neighbors have experienced or endured; the pervasive and systemic differences that made headline after headline this past year. It is very possible that without this understanding, we will not be able to welcome others as Christ has welcomed us.

We begin this year by learning about the structural underpinnings of American society. We will examine the book, "Caste," by Isabel Wilkerson. In this book, Wilkerson argues that American society is actually a "caste" system, much like in India. We will have a variety of options for engagement with this book, from weekly book clubs, to monthly discussion groups, and a one-time gathering (look for sign-ups in your email and on Facebook). We will also be focusing our Adult Forums on this topic with a variety of speakers from around the world. They will help us learn about how America looks from other perspectives as they share their own insights and stories.

I invite you to join us as we begin this journey of self-discovery. The easiest way to begin is to attend our Adult Forums in January (live via Zoom or later via YouTube). If you are interested in the book "Caste," and need help getting a copy, please let us know. Above all, I know that there may be moments where we learn things about ourselves that are difficult, but, in the end, we will begin to understand that it's not really about us, but about God's hope and call for us and for our church. Our mission as a church begins by welcoming others as we have been welcomed. And, lest we forget, we have been welcomed in grace by a God whose love is poured out on us abundantly.

Peace,

Pastor Erick



Worship & Fellowship

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Annual Meeting

St. John Lutheran's Annual meeting will be held **via Zoom on January 31, 2021**. The church council passed a resolution at its December meeting legally allowing for us to conduct the business of the church via zoom this year. Everyone with access to a phone, smartphone, tablet or computer will be able to attend. More information will be coming soon about registering. To help anyone who is daunted by connecting to the meeting, we will offer two practice sessions. If you would like to practice connecting to the meeting on your computer or by telephone, please join us on either of the following dates: **Sunday, January 17 or 24 from 11:30am-12:00pm**. If you have questions, please call the church office at 701-232-8521.

Information to connect to the meeting via Zoom or telephone will be the same as for worship, which is printed in the next column.

Please be sure to watch for more announcements about the annual meeting by mail, email, and on Facebook.

Live Online Worship

We've had wonderful online attendance for worship throughout the pandemic. St. John will continue to offer online worship on **Sundays at 9:30am** and **Wednesdays at 7:00pm**. There are three options for attending worship remotely:

1. Facebook Live:

To join us for worship on Facebook Live, go to **facebook.com/stjohnfargo/live**. A Facebook account is not required.

2. Worship on Zoom:

Join the Zoom meeting on your computer by copying and pasting this link into the URL box on your browser: <https://zoom.us/j/96954699012?pwd=VmJSV3F0SzBoUURqQlITR1ZJaDBFZz09>

Or you can go to zoom.com (or open your Zoom app), click on "join a meeting" and enter the following when prompted:

Meeting ID: 969 5469 9012

Passcode: 0EJFf7

3. Worship by Phone:

Dial: 1-312-626-6799 (long distance rates may apply)

It will ask for your meeting ID.

Dial: 969 5469 9012 then press #

It will ask for your participant ID. **Press #**

It will ask for your meeting password.

Dial: 502823 then press #

It will tell you that you are in the meeting, and how many other people are listening by phone. In just a moment, you will hear the service. You will not be able to talk back. Thank you for joining us for worship! If you would like to stay for fellowship time and Adult Forum, please stay on the line.

Worship & Fellowship cont'd

Thank you for Photos of Your Christmas Decorations!

A big THANK YOU to everyone who sent in photos of their Christmas decorations. We had enough photos for a 10 minute slideshow. Wow! This little gesture made us all feel a little bit closer to each other this Christmas.

Music Notes

We have had some wonderful worship services throughout December, including Wednesday Advent services, the Kids' Christmas Program, Christmas Eve services, and wonderful instrumental preludes and postludes. THANK YOU to all of our instrumentalists and singers, the St. John Choir, and the Cross+Walk Sunday School kids and their parents! It has been SO fun working with all of you on these virtual worship services.

YOU ROCK!!!

—Dawn Papenfuss, Director of Music

Zoom Fellowship

Between worship and Adult Forum on **Sundays (around 10:10am-10:30am)**, everyone is invited to a virtual Fellowship time. This will be a time to talk, laugh, catch up, and maybe make a new connection!

For Fellowship, please use the same Zoom information as listed in the "Live Online Worship" article on page 2 to log into Zoom on your computer or to call in by phone. If you're already logged in for worship and would like to attend fellowship, just stay logged in. You can choose to stay for Adult Forum afterward. On **Sundays January 3 and 10** we will have an extended fellowship time in place of Adult Forum.

MUGG Night

Men Under God's Guidance

All men are invited to a virtual MUGG Night. On **Monday, January 11 at 5:30pm** join us over Zoom for a time of fellowship. Here is the Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/92245069933?](https://zoom.us/j/92245069933?pwd=NzRxBkVpOUV0QkhkelprUT09)

[pwd=NzRxBkVpOUV0QkhkelprUT09](https://zoom.us/j/92245069933?pwd=NzRxBkVpOUV0QkhkelprUT09)

Or Meeting ID: 922 4506 9933

Passcode: mugg

Questions? Contact Joel Kangas: 701-235-5924

Check out our Facebook group!

Women & Wine

All women are invited to join us for food, drinks and fun! **Usually the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30pm on Zoom.**

Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/95590638372?](https://zoom.us/j/95590638372?pwd=ZHRkb2kwNVFTMktRYm5MV2FQNUlrUT09)

[pwd=ZHRkb2kwNVFTMktRYm5MV2FQNUlrUT09](https://zoom.us/j/95590638372?pwd=ZHRkb2kwNVFTMktRYm5MV2FQNUlrUT09)

Or Meeting ID: 955 9063 8372

Passcode: wine

Questions? Contact Julie Staigle: 701-361-1824

Check out our Facebook group!

Stephen Ministry

If you're emotionally struggling now during the pandemic, please contact one of our Stephen leaders for more information about Stephen Ministry: Pastor Brian: 701-212-5214
Sue Erickson: 701-541-0847

EXHAUSTED BY THE PANDEMIC?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE IT ALONE.
A Stephen Minister can walk alongside you or a loved one to offer support and care—and it's free and confidential.
To learn more, contact one of our Stephen Leaders.

Bible Studies & Education

Adult Forums

Sundays at 10:30am on Zoom.

- Jan 3 Fellowship
- Jan 10 Fellowship
- Jan 17 Pr. Erick "Intro of Welcome Year Theme"
- Jan 24 Dr. Eric Rothgery "Caste in India"
- Jan 31 No Adult Forum—Annual Meeting

Use the Zoom link from online worship (p. 2) or Meeting ID: 969 5469 9012
Passcode: 0EJFf7

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesdays at 10:30am on Zoom.

Please join us for this pastor-led Bible study as we dive deeper into the text for the coming Sunday.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91458607719?pwd=cFY1NkkrNFZUcitRRkZ3L1g3V0dOdz09>
Or Meeting ID: 914 5860 7719
Passcode: 0cMCqZ

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesdays at 2:00pm on Zoom.

Everyone is welcome to join us! We'll be starting a new study in January.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/93602092643?pwd=MndGcW5KdlBzVkrRhS0Z6T29UY0Zudz09>
Or Meeting ID: 936 0209 2643
Passcode: 4pvdMA

Daily Devotions

A word of thanks to all the St. John members who have written devotions for our community of faith during this time of social distancing!

If you are interested in sharing a devotion please contact either Pastor Brian or Pastor Erick. Thank you for sharing Christ's love with others!

—Pastor Brian

Daily Devotions can be found at stjohnfargo.com or on our Facebook page. To get them emailed to you daily, please email office@stjohnfargo.com, OR to get them mailed to you weekly, please call 701-232-8521.

Book Club with Pastor Erick

Everyone is welcome to join us for our new study! On **Monday, January 11 at 7:00pm** and **Tuesday, January 12 at 1:00pm on Zoom**, we'll start our study of "The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming" by David Wallace-Wells. The book is available on AmazonSmile. See page 8. If you have trouble getting a copy of the book, please contact the office at 701-232-8521.

Feel free to join us on Mondays at 7:00pm OR Tuesdays at 1:00pm throughout this study.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88082819369?pwd=VllVOXRNbTc1UEd2dmkyOER3NW9xQT09>
Or Meeting ID: 880 8281 9369
Passcode: 215273

St. John Book Club

This is the monthly book club that is made up of St. John members and non-members alike. We meet the first Monday of each month over Zoom, with a different book to discuss each time. New members are always welcome! Please contact Jane Nissen (701-235-0436) for more information, including the Zoom login.

This Year's Book Schedule: (7:00pm on Zoom)

Jan 4 ***His for Hawk*** by Helen McDonald

Feb 1 ***Caste*** by Isabel Wilkerson

Mar 1 ***Beneath a Scarlet Sky*** by Mark Sullivan

Apr 5 ***Lies My Teacher Told Me***
by James W. Loewen

May 3 ***The Story of More*** by Hope Lahren

Children, Youth, & Family

Cross+Walk Sunday School



Please join us for our new theme in January, "Rules for Life" (©reThink Group). We'll learn that God wants us to be responsible with what we're given and how we treat others.

Sundays from 10:30am-11:00am on Zoom.

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99393027078?pwd=VS85NmZPT2JLSTZEekJ1dWI5c0pvUT09>

Or Meeting ID: 993 9302 7078

Passcode: Crosswalk

Cross+Walk Sunday School has always had a focus on family faith formation, and this year we get to double down on family. Thanks to Zoom, we will still get to meet as one large group, for a short time of songs, stories, and a bit of silliness. But where this digital environment really shines is in Family Small Groups. You and your family will have a setting to sit together and open the Bible. We put together step-by-step guides to walk you through a simple Bible activity and to talk together about the promises of God for you and the world. And you'll be paired up with another family or two for a comfortable and intimate group to walk through this together.

Blessings,

Erin Bjerke, Youth Education Director

Virtual Christmas Program

A big THANK YOU to all of the kids and families who participated in the virtual Christmas program. It was a lot of fun this year! It will continue to be available for viewing on our Facebook page: facebook.com/stjohnfargo/videos

Milestones Ministry

Upcoming Milestones:

3rd Grade "Ten Commandments": Jan 17 & 24

Kindergarten "Kids & Money": Feb 14 & 21

For more information, please contact Erin at ebjerke@stjohnfargo.com or 701-232-8521.

Parent Small Group

Next meeting: Monday, January 11 from 8:30pm-9:30pm on Zoom. This is a time for parents to connect with one another and talk about what's on their mind, including the unique challenges of parenting an elementary schooler during the pandemic, and take time to center themselves and pray.

Here is the Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/91826363600?](https://zoom.us/j/91826363600?pwd=MWV5VExidVF5bTFvSkhaY2RCU0ptdz09)

[pwd=MWV5VExidVF5bTFvSkhaY2RCU0ptdz09](https://zoom.us/j/91826363600?pwd=MWV5VExidVF5bTFvSkhaY2RCU0ptdz09)

Family Game Time

Please join us on Zoom for some fun for the whole family! On **Sunday January 10, from 4:00pm-5:00pm**, everyone is invited to join us for some Jackbox games, and maybe even some fun trivia! You'll need a computer or tablet to connect to Zoom and a smartphone or tablet to use as your game controller. Here is the Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/93085213181?](https://zoom.us/j/93085213181?pwd=emIKd0FONkNsajJURzI5ZWJseGx1dz09)

[pwd=emIKd0FONkNsajJURzI5ZWJseGx1dz09](https://zoom.us/j/93085213181?pwd=emIKd0FONkNsajJURzI5ZWJseGx1dz09)

Or Meeting ID: 930 8521 3181; Passcode: 0gvESG₅

Children, Youth, & Family Cont'd

6th-8th Grade Confirmation

Wednesdays from 6:00pm-6:50pm on Zoom.

Confirmation Schedule

- Jan 6 Learning #8 (Apostles' Creed 3rd Article)
- Jan 13 Learning #9 (The Lord's Prayer)
- Jan 20 Learning #10 (The Lord's Prayer)
- Jan 27 Mentor Connections #2
- Feb 3 Learning #11 (Baptism)
- Feb 10 Learning #12 (Holy Communion)
- Feb 17 Ash Wednesday (NO CLASS—please worship with us online)

Confirmation Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/94444353487?pwd=YmNpa05XMxE2eDkvZGpyS0NPZmpLQT09>

Or Meeting ID: 944 4435 3487

Passcode: confirm

9th Grade Confirmation

Our 9th grade Confirmation students will be meeting on the first Wednesday of each month from **7:00pm-7:30pm on Zoom**. We will be using a peer ministry resource to guide our discussion. Ninth graders are encouraged to stay for High School Youth Group afterward.

- Jan 6 Hurt - Understanding a Friend
- Feb 3 Help - Helping a Friend
- Mar 3 Hands - Walking beside a Friend
- Apr 7 Confirmation Worship Service Planning and Review of Experience

Please use the same Zoom login info as 6th-8th Grade Confirmation above.

High School Youth Group

All youth grades 9-12 are invited to join Jeremy on Zoom on **Wednesdays from 7:30pm-8:30pm**. This will be a time for hanging out and playing games.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6740785715>

Please contact Jeremy with questions: jeremy@stjohnfargo.com



A Note from Jeremy...

It was an absolute JOY to be a part of putting together the Cross+Walk Christmas Program and Christmas Eve services. I love being able to see all the videos everyone sent in for them. If you happen to have missed them, check them out on our Facebook page. They are definitely worth watching. I'm looking forward to seeing the new ways God works in 2021. Happy New Year!

Peace,

Jeremy Maahs, Youth Programming Director

Children, Youth, & Family Cont'd

Family Pen Pals

I don't know about you, but I love sending and receiving letters! That's why we've started a new children's activity called Family Pen Pals. This is a no-tech, Covid-safe way for families from St. John to get to know each other during the pandemic.

Families with children from age 3 through grade 5 are invited to participate. Interested families sign up and are then assigned another family to be their Pen Pal. Families are expected to write to their Pen Pal Family about once per month. Need ideas? You can find weekly writing prompts in the weekly Cross+Walk Sunday School emails and on the Children, Youth, & Family Facebook page.

You can still sign up for Family Pen Pals by emailing Erin at ebjerke@stjohnfargo.com.

I'm so excited for our families to write to each other!

—Erin Bjerke, Youth Education Director

Kids' Coloring Time

Tuesdays from 3:30pm-4:15pm on Zoom.

Erin will be hosting a time for kids (age 3 - grade 5) to get together over Zoom and color! Erin will email out a coloring sheet each week that you can print, or you can use your own. This will be a time to catch up with each other and hang out while we do something creative.

Here is the Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98851753584?pwd=a1B3WmlhVEoxWnQ2UlpBd2lzL3ZoQT09>

Or Meeting ID: 988 5175 3584

Passcode: 2wXpEe

Preschool News

Delivering December Differently

Our preschool Christmas program was a bit different this year. Teachers documented the children singing in the sanctuary, playing reindeer games, acting out the Nativity, making parent gifts, and playing in the Christmas themed drama room. Jeremy Maahs masterfully combined the pictures and videos for each of the eight classes into a heartwarming production to share with families. Our favorite was a Brady Bunch-style rendition of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" with each of the eight sessions and the teachers.

Our Preschool Greatness Squad constructed and packed over 200 gingerbread Nativity kits. Kits were sent home with each family with all the supplies, a gingerbread prayer, and a Bible verse read-along. Teachers enjoyed delivering to past preschool families.

Preschoolers loved dressing up as Mary, Joseph, the manger animals, and even the star. Children touched and observed gold, frankincense, and myrrh. A preschooler proclaimed, "I'm a gift from God!" when her mother picked her up.

We wish everyone a happy and healthy new year.

—Jana Bruhschwein, Preschool Director



Announcements

Sundays At-a-Glance

9:30am: Worship (Facebook Live & Zoom)

10:10am-10:30am: Fellowship (Zoom)

10:30am-11:30am: Adult Forum (Zoom)

10:30am-11:00am: Cross+Walk Sunday School (Zoom)

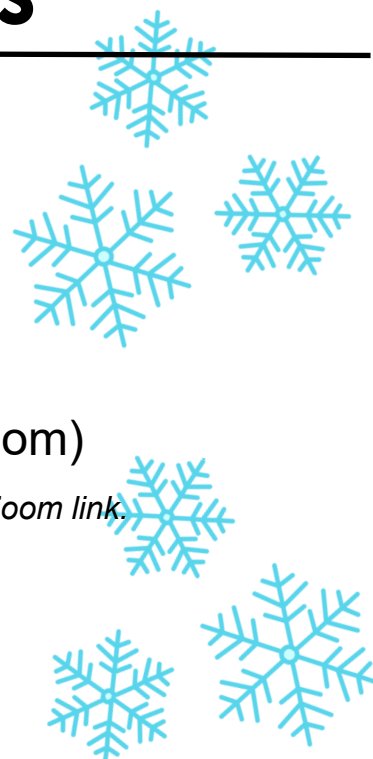
Worship, Fellowship, and Adult Forum will all be accessible using the same Zoom link.

AmazonSmile

Did you know that you can donate to St. John by shopping on Amazon.com? It's easy! When you do your Amazon shopping, just go to [smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose St. John Lutheran Church as your charitable organization. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to St. John!

Attention Snowbirds

If you will be living at a different address this winter and would like church correspondence delivered to you without interruption, please call or email the church office at 701-232-8521; office@stjohnfargo.com. Please confirm to us your winter address and tell us which date to begin using it and which date to switch back to your local address. Thank you!



Contact Us

St. John Lutheran Church
1710 5th Street South, Fargo, North Dakota 58103
701-232-8521
email: office@stjohnfargo.com
website: www.stjohnfargo.com

The Ministry Team of St. John:

All the People of God, along with

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Erick J. Thompson

Associate Pastor: Rev. Brian Hansen

Director of Music/Organist: Dawn Papenfuss

Youth Education Director & Office Secretary: Erin Bjerke

Youth Programming Director: Jeremy Maahs

Office & Finance Manager: John Bell

Facility Assistant: Jordan Erickson

St. John Christian Preschool Director: Jana Bruhschwein

Preschool Teachers: Kellie Knodel, Cheryl Dietz,
Katie Mare, Katie Maple, Michele Wangen,
Shelley Krosbakken, Jami Olson

Accompanists: Suzanne Schultz & Marcia Bettenhausen

Handbell Director: Jessica Westgard Larson

Articles accepted before

5:00pm on January 20th for the February 2021 *Herald*.

St. John Church Council

| | | |
|-----------|------------------|-------------------|
| 2019-2021 | Amanda Holt | President |
| 2019-2021 | Charlotte Ronson | Vice President |
| 2019-2021 | Ron Twedt | Vice President |
| 2019-2021 | Gail Reiersen | Worship & Music |
| 2019-2021 | AJ Klein | Membership |
| 2020-2022 | Kate Syverson | Youth Education |
| 2020-2022 | Michael Westhoff | Social Concerns |
| 2020-2022 | Sadie Thompson | Youth Programming |
| 2020-2022 | Mike Williams | Property |

January 2021

St. John Lutheran Church

1
NEW YEAR'S DAY

| | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|--|--|--|----|----|---|
| 9:30 AM Worship (Facebook Live) | | | 10:30 AM Bible Study (Zoom) | 2:00 PM Wednesday Bible Study (Zoom) | | | |
| 10:10 AM Extended Fellowship Time (Zoom) | | | 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM Kids' Coloring Time (Zoom) | 5:00 PM Stephen Ministry Mtg (Zoom) 6:00 PM Confirmation (Zoom) 7:00 PM 9th Grade Confirmation (Z) 7:00 PM Wednesday Worship (FB Live) 7:30 PM HS Youth Group (Zoom) | | | |
| 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM Cross+Walk Sunday School (Zoom) | | | | | | | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | |
| 9:30 AM Worship (Facebook Live) | 5:30 PM MUGG Night (Zoom) | 10:30 AM Bible Study (Zoom) | 2:00 PM Wednesday Bible Study (Zoom) | | | | |
| 10:10 AM Extended Fellowship Time (Zoom) | 7:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 1:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 5:00 PM Youth Ed Comm Mtg (Zoom) | | | | |
| 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM Cross+Walk Sunday School (Zoom) | 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM Parent Small Group (Zoom) | 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM Kids' Coloring Time (Zoom) | 6:00 PM Confirmation (Zoom) | | | | |
| 4:00 PM Family Game Time (Zoom) | | | 7:00 PM Wednesday Worship (Facebook Live) 7:30 PM HS Youth Group (Zoom) | | | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | |
| 9:30 AM Worship (Facebook Live) | 7:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 10:30 AM Bible Study (Z) | 2:00 PM Wednesday Bible Study (Zoom) | 6:30 PM Women & Wine (Zoom) | | | |
| 10:10 AM Fellowship Time (Zoom) | | 1:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 5:00 PM Newsletter Deadline | | | | |
| 10:30 AM Adult Forum (Zoom) | | 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM Kids' Coloring Time (Zoom) | 6:00 PM Confirmation (Zoom) | | | | |
| 10:30 AM C+W Sunday School (Zoom) | | | 7:00 PM Wednesday Worship (Facebook Live) | | | | |
| 11:00 AM 3rd Gr. Learning Session (Z) | | 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Church Council (Zoom) | | | | | |
| 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM Practice Login (Z) | | | 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM High School Youth Group (Zoom) | | | | |
| 12:00 PM Stephen Ministry Mtg (Zoom) | | | | | | | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |
| 9:30 AM Worship (Facebook Live) | 7:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 10:30 AM Bible Study (Zoom) | 2:00 PM Wednesday Bible Study (Zoom) | | | | |
| 10:10 AM Fellowship Time (Zoom) | | 1:00 PM Book Club with Pastor Erick (Zoom) | 6:00 PM Confirmation (Zoom) | | | | |
| 10:30 AM Adult Forum (Zoom) | | | 7:00 PM Wednesday Worship (Facebook Live) | | | | |
| 10:30 AM C+W Sunday School (Zoom) | | 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM Kids' Coloring Time (Zoom) | | | | | |
| 11:00 AM 3rd Gr. Learning Session (Z) | | | 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM High School Youth Group (Zoom) | | | | |
| 31 | | | | | | | |
| ANNUAL MEETING (Zoom) | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 AM Worship (Facebook Live) | | | | | | | |
| 10:10 AM Fellowship Time (Zoom) | | | | | | | |
| 10:30 AM C+W Sunday School (Zoom) | | | | | | | |